2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

b. The clothes of the family.

291 A man's dress is a piece of cloth, one cubit broad and five cubits long, this is to take round the loins; and to wrap oneself in they have a cotton shawl or an over-cloth, five cubits long and three cubits broad. If they are wealthy, they also wrap a turban cloth, some five cubits long, round their head. Poor people use a piece of cloth some two cubits long and half a cubit broad as a loin-strip, or they have a piece of cloth two and a half cubits long and one cubit broad as a loin-strip. And during the cold season they have a piece of cloth, some three cubits square, to wrap round themselves.

Women have only one piece, ten cubits long, of women's cloth; this they take round the waist and up over the back and breast.

Children stay naked, until they are eight years old; after this age boys get a loin-strip and girls a girl-loincloth.

302 Men arrange a hair-knot, and the women tie up their hair with a plait of cow's tail hair. All use a comb.

c. The ornaments of the Santals.

301 Formerly men and women, when they had reached some age, did not use ornaments. And the ornaments of young men and girls were only flowers. Nowadays all have earrings, whether women or men, whether boys or girls. Elderly men also use wristlets. Besides these, elderly men have no ornaments. Elderly women have wristlets, necklaces, and rings.

Young men have wristlets, necklaces, and rings, and when they dance they adorn themselves with hollow bells round the ankles, hollow ankle-rings, blue-jay feathers, and flowers. Girls adorn themselves with wristlets, anklets, curved anklets, thin toe-rings, great toe-rings, toe-rings with hollow bells, necklaces, rings, solid close-fitting necklets, solid neck ornaments, arm ornaments, upper arm ornaments, and flowers. On small boys and girls they put hollow anklets and small hollow bells.

d. Men's work.

462 From the month of Phalgun to the end of Baisak (i. e., from the middle of February to the middle of May) it is "sitting time". Then the men make implements for
221 their own use and gather provisions for the household; then they make ploughbeams and yokes, ploughs, and clod-crushers, earth-shovels and cart-wheels, cart shafts and axles, neck-ropes and yoke-leather-thongs, hide-straps and ropes, spinning wheels and cotton-cleaning implements, handles for spades and pick-axes, axes and adzes, bedstead legs and frames, stools and wooden slabs to sit on, wooden ladles and spoons, bows and arrows, flutes, wooden pestles and mortars and weaving implements; they weave cloth and bedsteads, and they bring firewood and wood for the house, and they repair the house.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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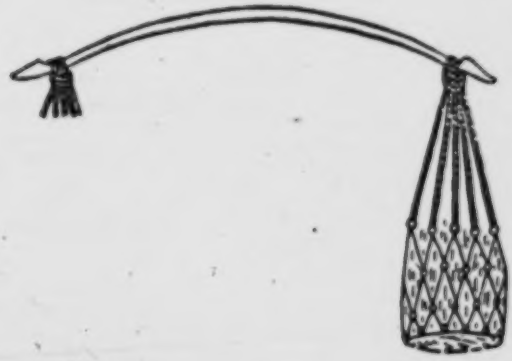
For purposes of transport, they use carrying-nets in the shape of bags slung at both ends of a pole carried on the shoulder called "Sikuar maran." They

Argo



Sika

are made of twisted strings of hemp fibre and are very strong. These are used by men ; while the women carry things on their head while marketing or on travel, using a basket for the purpose. At times one sees them carrying bottles nicely poised on their heads, in utter defiance of all laws of gravitation.

Dress

The Santal women now generally wear bordered "saris" not less than seven cubits in length. Half of this serves as the lower garment being knotted at the waist, the other half is passed over the left shoulder and hangs in the front. They use no veils for their heads of ravendark mass of wavy hair. They keep

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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302 them combed in a nice knob at the back of their
301 head and decorate them with flowers of all hues and frequently with tufts of red silk.

291 In Mayurbhanj, we found the children upto five wearing a very short loin-cloth, worn round a coloured string tied at the waist (Bengali, *ghunsi* ; Santali, *danda jhinjhir*). They call this cloth "gendre." Girls after their tenth year wear a thick cloth called "panhand" in Santali (Oriya, *lahanga*). Some of these have a bright violet border. Such "saris" reach only upto the knee, as they measure three cubits in length and one and a half cubits in width. But they take care to cover the upper part of their bodies with another part of the same
[184] measurement, called "gamcha" by them.[1] It should however be mentioned that the dress of Santal women varies from area to area and those in intimate contact of Hindu life have taken to using the mill-made "saris" as a point of fashion, which are wound several times round the waist, and then carried over the left shoulder.

But women, who have retained their primitive style intact, make several pleats in the portion bound round the waist at the front, and the end thrown over the shoulder from behind falls over the breast,

1 Dr. Campbell in his Dictionary (Santali to English), calls this *Gógók'*.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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and the edges are tucked in on either side into the portion round the middle.[1] A second dress is of "kantha"-cloth (pieces of old cloth sewn together) which is bound by women round the waist and completed with another piece of cloth thrown over the shoulder and covering the breast. Yet another fashion known as "lebda gögök" and "lebda rakap," requires the cloth to be passed over the left shoulder in front, with the end hanging down the back.[2]

The men are scantily dressed. In the Santal Parganas, one generally sees them wearing a short cloth tied at the waist, the ends being passed on and secured near the end of the spine to allow free movement. Mayurbhanj Santals wear at home, a loin cloth, which they call "panchi" (Bengali, *gamcha*); but when going out, they put on a long sheet of thick cloth, five cubits in length and one and a half cubit in width, which they term "kutcha." We learnt that these are sometimes woven at home.

Ornaments

Women all over the world are fond of ornaments and Santal women are no exception to the general rule. Flowers of all colours are stuck to their hair, and over their ears, but those who can just afford,

1 Dr. Campbell's Dictionary, p. 43.
2 Ditto, p. Ditto.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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SANTAL PARGANAS

The old Santal would not grow potato due to their conservative instincts even when Pontet asked them, now they grow it along with tomato. The women now wear mill-made saris and in the urban areas of Santal Parganas, they seem indistinguishable from their Hindu sisters, because in fairs and rallies, they generally dress alike. Some widows, it has been seen at Bolpur, dress themselves in white. It is interesting to hear that in some areas, there is lesser divorce. And due to the impact of new ideas women's right in inheritance is being slowly recognised by the state and the society through indirect legal fictions.

With ideas of reform in the atmosphere, some acting as disintegrating forces, others operating on a constructive basis, it was no surprise to us to come across a manifesto signed by some prominent educated Santals of Bengal and some parts of Bihar calling upon their brethren of Midnapore, Bankura, Manbhum, Singhbhum and other areas to engage in social reforms for the maintenance of their tribal honour. It stated that the Santals had firmly resolved that:

1. No Santal, man or woman, should drink *Pochoi* (rice-beer) in shops as the tribe had been ruined by drink while the grog-shop owners and *mahajans* were becoming rich. Temperance would help the Santals financially.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

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[262] 2. Carrion should not be eaten. The signatories refer to this custom with feelings of shame.

[535] 3. Santals should not dance or sing anywhere
[533] except in their houses or villages. The manifesto reminds the tribe that the Europeans, Hindusthanis, the eastern hill-tribes sing and dance, but they avoid the hill-sides and public places. The ancient Santals had no public dancing.

[593] 4. Force should not be resorted to without reason as it slackens the marriage tie and gives rise to various vices.

[291] 5. Santals should wear coarse cloth and their
[301] women should give up wearing glass-bangles.

During my last visit to Mayurbhanj, I found the air thick with these ideas, specially among the educated Santals and there was a noticeable tendency to give up dancing and singing in public. It became clear to us that aboriginal sets of value and philosophy of life were undergoing a perceptible change. Times are gone when the tribes joined with the rest of the population in their pujas and festivals as in the past. To a discerning eye, this ban has robbed the tribes of the *joie de vivre* to a great extent and the infiltration of political ideas plus a realisation of their rather poor economic life, has cast a pall of gloom even on the denizens of forests, hill-tops and wide expanses of laterite soil,

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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[End Plate I]

A Santal Couple

[Page 49]

Photo: Mayurbhanj State

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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Santal Physical Types [Page 49]
Photo : Mayurbhanj State

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[End Plate 2] Santal Girls of Modern Times
[Page 49]
Photo ; Indra K. Chatterjee

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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[End Plate 3]

Washing Clothes [Page 64]

Photo . Tilak Bandopadhyay

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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At a Fair

[Page 64]
Photo : D. S. Nahar

[End Plate 4]

3: Mukherjea O, Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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A Santal fishing [Page 97]
Photo : D. S. Nahar

[End Plate 6]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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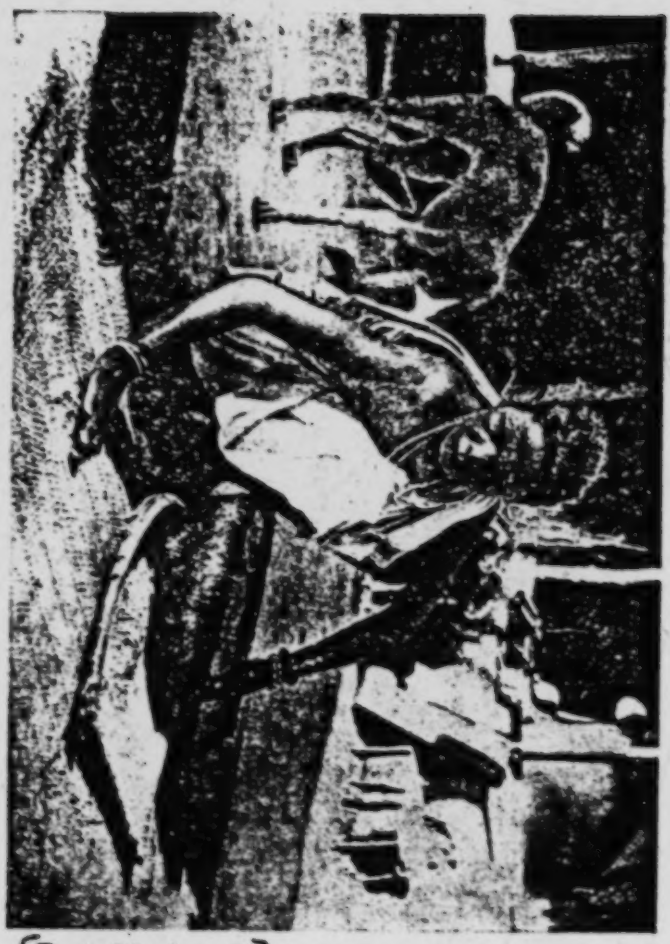

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Winnowing Corn

[Page 98]

Photo : Tilak Bandopadhyay

[End plate 7]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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Santal Reapers

[Page 98]

Photo : D. S. Nahar

[End Plate 8]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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The type that charms [Page 410]
Photo : Tilak Bandopadhyay

[End Plate II]

3: Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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A Santal belle [Page : 410]
Photo : Tilak Bandopadhyay

[End Plate 12]

3: Mukherjea O, Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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Head-Dress of Santal Women

[Page 416]

Photo: Sambhu Saha

[End Plate 13]

4: Biswas D, E-3,4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL [illegible]AS

DRESS

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The little apron or "lengta" which is worn by all Santal men, is made of white cloth, about four feet long and ten inches wide. In putting it they tie one thick-string round the waist and one end of this apron is tied with that string at the back and the portion left hanging is pulled through the legs from the back and up through the string in front, the rest sometimes hangs or is pulled through the legs from the front and tied with the string on the waist. The regular dress of the adult Santals consists of a loin cloth which hangs from the waist to the knee joint. The Santals generally use no head-dress. During marriage or other similar occasions they wear a turban, which is a long narrow white cloth, soaked in turmeric. Now-a-days young men, when they come to attend Hindu festivals like Durga, or Kali puja adorn their head with a yellow coloured turban. At present dhotis and saries are worn by the well-to-do Santals men and women respectively like the Bengalis. Boys till they are five or six years old wear nothing. The Santal adults do not always wear a body cloth, using it in the cold season and very rarely in summer. When they come to the market they wear it over their 'lengta'. They have no warm clothing for the winter, and children of two or three years remain undressed.

[178]

[554]
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The Santal women use two separate clothes.[1] One they wear and with the other they cover their breasts. The piece which they wear is three feet long and two and a half feet in width. The piece which they use to cover the breasts is three feet long and two feet wide. The Santals when wearing new cloth colour the four

1 [Erratum: this should read "cloths." Cf. errata sheet, category 11b, p. ix -- Analyst]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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SANTAL PARGANAS

291 178 294 432 ends with turmeric. Formerly, all these clothes were made on their own loom, but now-a-days the Santals generally buy what they need from the market of the adjoining town.

283 286 248 283 407 **Spinning and weaving**:-The Santals wear cloth prepared on their own loom with their own thread besides purchasing from the market. They raise cotton for their own use. After the cotton is brought in, the first process is ginning. The ginning machine is very simple. It is an upright (drawing) frame work in which two wooden rollers are arranged to run in opposite directions by a sort of gear when the crank attached to one roller is turned. Cotton with seeds are put within the two rollers, and when the rollers are made to revolve, the cotton is separated from the seeds. Cotton

283 is then spread and small bits of cotton are put over a bowstring which is then snapped. This does away with all the lumps and makes the cotton fluffy. It is then made into small rolls preparatory to spinning. Spinning is done by the spinning wheel. Spinning wheels are essentially spindles fitted horizontally into bearings and rotated by means of a cord passing round the threads attached to the two wheels and spindle. The wheels are revolved by hand alone. The spindle consists of a long iron needle, the working end is pointed, the other end is inserted into a fixed horizontal wood. Two wheels are fixed at a distance of about 6 inches to 8 inches apart in wood, a round stone is inserted in it between the two wheels. The two ends of the wood, with which wheels are attached, are placed on two uprights which again are fixed on a base of a "T" shaped wooden frame. The handle is fixed to the wood in which the wheels are fixed.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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SANTAL PARGANAS

[facing P. 219]

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Parganait
MR. SAKRAM HEMBROM
and his family (*Christian*)

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Assistant to the Parganait
DESH-MANJHI
(*Christian*)

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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SANTAL PARGANAS

and it is conducted according to the provision of the Indian Christian Marriage Act.

Material Culture. Material culture of the Santals of the Santal parganas has not much changed. They now wear cotton dhuties, shirts and gangees and the women have accepted cotton saris which are used by the Hindus. The well-to-do Christian Santals wear European dress, *i.e.* coats, pants, shirts, socks and shoes. The christian women wear Saris, blouses and petti coat according to the Hindu style.

Some of the younger men and women of the Christian community go out for employment in the towns and cities and when they come back they display their superior material culture, such as fountain pen, wristwatches and other luxury goods.

Rice beer is their important drink but the Christian missionaries make propaganda in favour of total abstinence, and the Christian Santals are gradually giving up this habit and tea is being substituted for it. Machine made cigarettes are slowly coming into use.

In the preparation of rice it seems they have copied something from the Bengali Hindus. The Santals like the Bengalis use boiled rice for their food and unboiled rice for offering to their tribal deities.

The indigenous husking machine of the Santals is mortar and pestle, but they also use husking lever (dhenki) in husking rice which they have copied from their Hindu neighbours.

The Santals, when they speak among themselves, use their own language. But with the 'Dikhus' in the Santal Parganas they speak in broken Hindi and

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They owe their present position of affluence to Santal habits of insobriety. Secondly, much of the land has been acquired by trading castes from Bihar who followed the Santals when the country was being opened up. They brought with them such things as salt and cooking oil, which they exchanged for grain. Clothing was added at a later date, for until within living memory Santals largely wove their own clothes from cotton grown on the lands surrounding their homesteads. Like the Sundis, these traders provided credit facilities for their customers and so gained power over them. The monsoon fails on the average once in seven years in Western Bengal, and the traders import grain in times of scarcity. Formerly this was lent out at a recognized rate of interest amounting to 100 per cent. per annum. The only security which a Santal had to offer was a mortgage on his land, and, if the trader wished it, the almost inevitable result was an action in the courts, followed by an auction at which the creditor purchased the land. The third important class among the landlords are the Brahmins, descendants of the men who were brought into the country to act as priests and court officials to the local *rajas* or rulers. At the time when British rule was being established many of these *rajas* exercised control over tracts of country that were largely covered by forest and sparsely inhabited. They encouraged Santals and some other peoples to settle as cultivators, and they also rewarded the services of their Brahmin officials by grants of land. Brahmins are forbidden by caste rules to engage in cultivation, so they in their turn encouraged Santals to become their tenants.

The Santals have a proverb: "A *Deko* friend is like a thorn fence." In other words, if you stumble into it you are liable to suffer from scratches. They sometimes make fun of themselves and exaggerate the fear that they feel. Thus: "The elders used to run away and hide in the jungle whenever they saw an umbrella approaching the village." But in spite of the fun, the fear persists. A difficulty arose a few years ago in a village Santal church when the superintending missionary placed there as pastor a man who was a *Deko*. This resulted in a vigorous protest, and the leader of the villagers' delegation summed up their feelings in the following parable: "When a kite is wheeling overhead the chickens all take shelter under their mother's wings. After they have grown up they know that the kite can do them no harm, but nevertheless whenever a kite is overhead they quake inwardly and cannot get on with their pecking." In the company of non-Santals, a Santal is inclined to become tongue-

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for their timber. The *sarjom*, which predominates, is a valuable tree, but locally it has not been permitted to grow to any height. The trees are cut once in seven years and the timber is exported chiefly to supply firewood in the towns, while the leaf is used for the leaf plates required in city homes and food shops. This activity provides the main subsidiary occupation and is in full swing whenever work in the fields slackens, though it is not sufficient to keep the Santals at home throughout the year. Women share in the occupation; they help the men by stacking the timber as it is cut into lengths, and they collect the leaves which older women sew together while sitting at home. Other women, in the time they can spare from duties at home, collect the twigs and dry branches which they need for domestic fuel. Boys from about the age of seven are engaged in their occupation of tending the village herd of goats and cattle, for which they receive wages from the owners of one anna per month for each goat and two annas per month for each head of cattle in their charge. They are sometimes joined by the younger girls, but after the girls are nine or ten they stay with their mothers, look after the house or help to nurse the younger children.

Women play little or no part in the organization of social or religious life, but they are supreme in household affairs. Although men lay claim to superior intelligence and women openly disclaim any knowledge or interest in affairs outside the home circle, the attitude of the two groups towards each other is one of good-natured tolerance. In Barikul, at the close of a festival when there had been much drinking, the men were feeling unwell. Babulal reports: "Some of the men are saying: 'Yesterday I had nothing to eat, so give me something today.' To which the women reply: 'We have eaten all the food; you men are drunk!' And so they drank more beer and spirits, and became even more drunken than they had been the day before." In his diary entry for the next day he records: "Today all the drunks have begun to beg for some stale rice gruel. The women scolded them: 'You have earned a lot of food, haven't you? Why should you not go out to beg?' " After this chaffing the women relented and gave the men some food before they set out once more to their work. The Santal wife attends fairs and markets; she buys her own clothes and attends to the household shopping. The contrast between them and their non-Santal neighbours is heightened by the fact that they do not cover their heads. One end of the *sari* is thrown loosely across the breasts and over the left shoulder.

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that reason. Gradual deforestation and the absence of any effective protection for wild animals account for the present scarcity. Leopards, once present in great numbers, are now rare, though black bears are still relatively common. Some of the smaller kinds of Indian deer are found. It is many years since a tiger was killed in the Bankura district. Wild pigs are abundant, and so is the jungle hare, and there are many species of bird whose flesh is prized by the Santal. Every male of the tribe is an expert with the bow and arrow, and he is trained in its use from early childhood. The village parties hold together; they carry their own rations of rice and dried *matkom* cake for the night meal, and they are accompanied by their sleek and well-fed dogs. The men are dressed in loin-cloths, but they wear turbans roughly wrapped round their heads for protection against the heat of the sun. Some of the younger boys carry drums instead of weapons. The drums are used to swell the noise in the forest as the animals are driven closer towards the centre and to signal a kill, but they are also needed for the dancing that will follow. The flesh of the animals is distributed according to a regular code, though the rules are passing from use and now it is usual for the stronger of two parties to take the flesh of a kill when it is in dispute. The man who draws first blood receives the *madol*, consisting of one hind-leg, a part of which he must give to the headman of his village. If the man who first touches the animal belongs to a different village, he receives a shoulder; if it has been slain by yet another person than the one who drew first blood, the slayer receives five ribs, one fore-leg and the liver. The *dihri* receives the neck, and the remainder of the flesh goes to the co-villagers of the man who wounded the animal and not of the man who killed it. When the meat is distributed among the villagers, those who carry drums receive a double portion, and some of the meat is given to the dogs.

By evening several hundred men gather in the place where they are to spend the night. Camp fires are lit near some watercourse, and the moon rises slowly over the graceful palms that fringe the water and the belt of *sarjom* trees beyond. For some it is a night of hard work, for others it is a night of revelry. The elders from all the villages are gathered together for this one night during the year and form the supreme council of the tribe. The disputes which have baffled their several efforts in the course of the year are brought forward. Complaints involving members of more than one village are voiced and range

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614 one of the original twelve *khût*. They are not allowed to have
614 spots made on them and they will not be vaccinated, but they
784 may be cicatrized; however, their daughters and sisters are not
[304] allowed to be tattooed until after they are married. The un-
[291] married men are not allowed to wear any garment made from
[342] jute. They must not plaster their houses with any other than
[531] white earth; and they may not draw any pictures on the walls
[532] except plantain trees and date palms or figures that look like
782 pictures of temples, drawn with three fingers only. They make
614 their sacrifice at the time of the *Sohrae*; this is performed in the
house, and they sacrifice a pig. One year it must be a male un-
castrated pig and the next year a female, and if for any reason
they cannot get hold of a pig they may sacrifice a black hen.
[825] They should sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit in the shelter of a
[178] white ant hill,[1] but in these days they bring some earth from the
ant hill into the house and sacrifice there."

614 In a Sarenga schoolboy's essay on the origin of his own clan,
773 he began by relating the creation of mankind and finally con-
[115] tinued: "All the Sorens were the soldiers of the Kisku, who were
the owners of the village at Campa Gar. The Marndi lived at
Cirunala, and between the two villages there flowed the Sitanala
river. They began to quarrel with each other because the people
of the two villages had to use the same river for bathing and for
drinking water. Now, since the Soren were the soldiers of the
Kisku, they are like the Gurkhas of Nepal. Just as the Gurkhas
are fierce and do not fear death, so too the Soren." So is virtue
614 inculcated by fostering pride in the clan. One of the sub-clans
[192] of the Soren is the Poita Soren. *Poita* is the word as pro-
[173] nounced by the Santals—for the sacred thread of the Brahmin.
They relate that in the very early days the ancestors of the
Soren were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and some of the
company began to prepare the food and cook it. In imitation of
Brahmin cooks they put on sacred threads and served all the
people. From that time they became known as Poita Soren.
[782] When they sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit they sacrifice to him
alone, and the offering has to consist of a male uncastrated pig.
The rite is performed at sunrise. They may eat the flesh at any
time during that day and the following night, and if they are
unable to finish it they must bury it before the following sunrise

[171] [1] For references to the sanctity of white ant hills see *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, by W. Crooke, C.I.E., p. 380. The belief is widespread in India. "From early times the earth from an ant hill has been regarded as specially pure, representing 'the savour of the earth', and it was, and is, used in building altars."

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and then a ram. The blood is placed in a vessel and fixed on the ground, surrounded with small stones. Only men may eat the meat of the animals sacrificed. The girls of this sub-clan are not allowed to wear Bengali-style *sañis* or shell bracelets at the time of their marriage, though they may do so after they are married. When the men of this sub-clan are bringing brides to their home they present them with a *hasli*, the neck ring, made of brass.

A whole range of the sub-clans is known as *Sada*, or "white". They may represent a reforming element, for their characteristic is a revolt against the use of red vermilion paint. When the first ancestors of the Sada Hembrom, so it is said, were going to perform a sacrifice they thought that they had with them all that they needed, but when they reached the spot where the sacrifice was to take place it was discovered that they had left behind their supply of *sindur*, the vermilion-coloured earth that plays a large part in the Santal cult. When they saw this they completed the sacrifice without the *sindur*, and since then their descendants have been known as Sada Hembrom and they have continued to observe the custom so carelessly begun! In other ways, too, they have abjured the use of vermilion. They make no use of it in the marriage ceremonial, though once their daughters are married and have become members of other clans they may put vermilion in the parting of their hair. The cloth which is a part of the presents given at the time of marriages must be white without any border, and their womenfolk are limited to plain cloth throughout life. The same pattern of behaviour applies to all the Sada sub-clans. The Sada Hasdak', along with some other sub-clans, when they perform their sub-clan sacrifices, first of all model a scorpion out of paste made from flour and water and offer it before going on to offer a hen, then a pig, and lastly a goat. This particular sub-clan has to eat all the flesh of the animals sacrificed and they are not allowed to throw any part of it away.

Some of the Murmu sub-clans are restricted in the type of dwelling-house that they may build. The majority of Santal house roofs are constructed on what is known in Bengal as the "charchala" plan. This consists of a thatch that slopes up from each of the four walls of the house. The main beam is set well above the four walls, being smaller than the length of the house, with four corner beams fixed two at each end of the main beam and going down to the four corners of the house to form the first stage of the framework on which the thatch rests. Most of the Murmu, however, have to build up the two end walls so that